

Library Analyzes Long Range Plan ✓

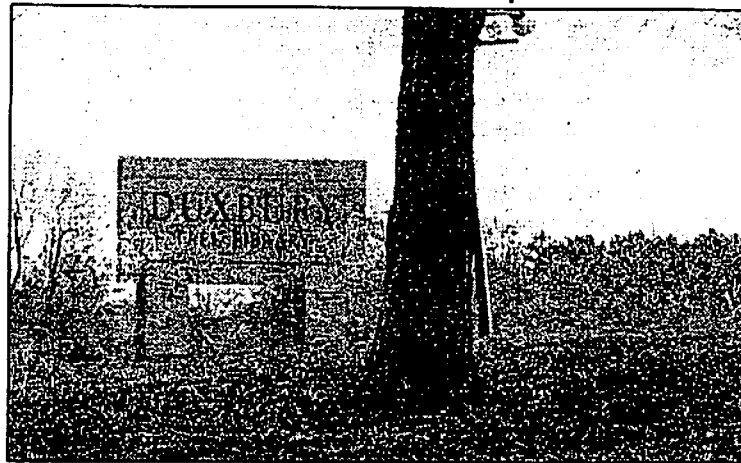
By MORAG MACLACHLAN

When fiscal year 2008 begins on July 1, the Duxbury Free Library will already be in the third year of its five year long range plan.

Library Director Elaine Winquist updates the state of the library's progress each December. She is pleased with the benchmarks that have been accomplished thus far and the direction in which the library is heading. However, the library's success hasn't happened overnight. Winquist said the process of creating the long range plan began in the summer of 2004.

"Plans used to look at the library from the staff's side, but now it is written from the customer's approach," Winquist said.

To determine the library's future direction, focus groups were held with staff and the public. Using this data, Winquist said a mission statement was crafted based on three service responses chosen from a list of 10 choices. Providing general information, the library as a commons, and lifelong learning were the three main goals identified.



The Duxbury Free Library will embark on the third year of its long-range plan in fiscal year 2008.

Further goals were developed based on each of the three service responses. Under general information, three additional benchmarks were highlighted: patrons will be able to obtain materials easily at or through the library, all patrons will find general information and reference assistance at or through the library and Internet access and related technologies will be available at or through the library. Winquist said the library strives to provide information for everyone from students working on a school project to adults conducting research.

Winquist said delivering items from the library's collection to the homebound is on the horizon as part of the general information service response.

"Delivering books to the homebound is in the planning stage," Winquist said. "We want to collaborate with the Senior Center. But this service is not just for seniors; people who have undergone surgery or mothers who have new babies will also benefit."

Another aspect of general information includes implementing more online options. Booking a museum pass via the Internet is already avail-

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- Elaine Winquist, Library Director

able to library patrons. Winquist said soon residents will be able to book a computer from home.

The library as a commons has two meanings.

"We want to physically be a commons and virtually," Winquist said.

Four further goals in the library as a commons service response are: patrons of all ages will be able to use appropriate study and gathering spaces, patrons of all ages will enjoy an array of cultural and educational programs, patrons are welcomed by a building and grounds that are clean and attractive and community groups will be able to use a variety of meeting spaces.

Maintaining a beautifully landscaped and inviting exterior is currently being addressed. Winquist said the Friends of the Library have earmarked a gift for beautifying the side of the building that faces the schools' campus. A grant is also being sought to install an irrigation system this spring.

The library as a commons has also been achieved by providing a wide variety of new programming. The Fourth Friday Fringe Film series featuring Duxbury resident and Brandeis University film professor James Mandrell, is in its second year and continues to fill the Merry Room each month, regardless of whether or not the event falls near a holiday.

"We are so pleased with the attendance," Winquist said. "A few years ago, we were not sure we would pull an audience. Now we are amazed at the great turnout."

Winquist said there was a "full house" even when the films have fallen close to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Another series that is attracting patrons to the library is the Sunday Salon Series. The theme of the event changes each month with an afternoon of jazz featured in December and holistic health being January's focus.

"We've had everything from therapeutic massage to aging gracefully without cosmetic surgery," Winquist said. Carol Jankowski, events coordinator and head of circulation, develops each month's events.

Providing these programs to meet the needs of children, young adults and adults is also a goal under the lifelong learning service response. Winquist said the library has applied for an On the Same Page grant to fund a community reading program for the winter of 2008. A work of fiction dealing with art or music will be selected to be read by the entire community. To ensure the program's success, Winquist said the library hopes to plan events to complement the reading program with local organizations like the Duxbury Art Association, South Shore Conservatory and the Council on Aging.

This is Winquist's second time helping prepare a five-year plan for the library. The complete five year plan can be accessed on the library's website at www.duxburyfree library.org.